

**The League of
Women Voters of
Alameda**

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www.lwvalameda.org

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The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We work to raise understanding of major policy issues and influence public policy through education. The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. We advocate only on issues that members have studied and reached consensus on. In an era of proliferating powerful special interests, the League's advocacy in the public interest is increasingly recognized as an essential voice of democracy.



VOTER

**Promoting Political Responsibility through Informed
and Active Participation**

Volume 46, Number 8, October 2015

MAJOR EVENT THIS MONTH

**League of Women Voters[®]
of Alameda**

presents



California's 'Top Two' Open Primaries: How Democratic Are They?

Keynote Speaker

State Controller BETTY YEE



Wednesday, October 21 • 7 - 9 PM

City of Alameda Free Library

1550 Oak Street @ Lincoln (enter from rear parking lot)

Panelists: Jennifer Ong & Ethan Rarick

Moderator: Anne Spanier



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Anne Spanier, Co-President

League of Women Voters of Alameda

If the League is to continue to carry out its mission of Education and Advocacy it will have to adapt its approach to meet the needs of a changing population. This means that we must reach out to a diverse community in a changing technological dynamic. That is why spending a Saturday morning at a four-hour workshop at the College of Alameda, as some League members of Alameda and Berkeley did recently, is imperative. Learning how to get a message out to different groups of people who perceive information in different ways is key to creating a dynamic and growing League.

A dynamic and growing league is just what Alameda is experiencing in these recent years. Today our membership is 132, a 43% increase over the membership of 92 in 2007. By comparison, national and state membership has been in steep decline over the last three decades. Recently our Alameda County sister League, Livermore Amador Valley, closed its doors.

Many believe that women no longer stay at home and join organizations such as the League. It is clear, however, in the last two decades that other factors are at work. Younger people are different consumers of political information. Blog sites, on line petition drives, social media sites like Facebook, and Twitter have replaced newspapers and discussion groups. Younger citizens are more likely to be engaged in activism.

Today more than ever, our communities need organizations to help them find unbiased and factual information with which to make informed choices about complex matters. The League can fill that need but must adapt to this changing dynamic. The successful Smart Voter has become a more powerful web site by incorporating Map Light, a site that tracks money in politics. Citizens need only a few clicks to uncover financial motivations behind many ballot measures. These are just some of the advances that are finding a home in the Alameda League.

Because of this our programs and special events are consistently drawing larger numbers of participants. Our general meeting of September 21 was well attended and our audience was enthusiastic and engaged. The publicity for our events has been outstanding and because of this we can now expect to reach a wider audience than ever. In October we plan a stellar program with State Controller Betty Yee, Jennifer Ong and Ethan Rarick tackling the issue of California's Open Primary system (see Calendar). November will be even more exciting. To all the wonderful volunteers who do so much, I say thank you!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Visit LWVAlameda.org/calendar.html for more information

Fri. Oct. 2nd
5:30 PM

First Friday no-host social dinner

China Villa, 891 Island Drive, Suite A, Harbor Bay Landing Shopping Center on Bay Farm Island. Everyone is welcome!
Reserve by noon Fri. connie.hanna@comcast.net

Wed. Oct. 21st
7:00-9:00 PM

Community forum: “California’s ‘Top Two’ Open Primaries: How Democratic Are They?” **State Controller Betty Yee** with panelists Jennifer Hildago Ong; Ethan Rarick, UC Berkeley.
Alameda Free Library, Conference Room.
Parking behind library at Santa Clara Ave. and Oak Street.
DON’T MISS THIS IMPORTANT EVENT!

Sat. Oct. 24th
2:00-4:00 PM

Hot Topics in the Library: Small group discussion
“Minimum Wage: What’s Fair? What’s Feasible? Who’s Covered?”
Alameda Free Library family study room; open to everyone
Reserve with Ruth at dixonmueller@yahoo.com, 865-2439.

Mon. Oct. 26th
3:00-4:30 PM

LWVA Book Group: *The Beautiful Struggle* by Ta-Nehisi Coates.
Applebee's Restaurant, 2263 South Shore Center, Alameda

Sat. Nov. 7th
9:30 AM-12 PM panel
1:00 PM – 2:30 PM tour

Community forum and bus tour: “**What Developments Are Coming to Alameda?**” Co-sponsored with Alameda Home Team and Alameda Association of Realtors. Panel of developers and City Planner Andrew Thomas. This is a repeat of last Spring’s successful panel and tour.
Alameda Elks Lodge, 2225 Santa Clara next to City Hall.

Thu. Nov. 12th
7:00-9:00 PM

Community forum: “Getting On and Off the Island: Alameda’s Transportation Future.” Gayle Payne, Transportation Coordinator, City of Alameda; Michele Bellows, Chair, Alameda Transportation Commission; and representatives of AC Transit (bus services) and Caltrans (tubes and bridges).
Alameda Free Library, Conference Room.
Parking behind library at Santa Clara Ave. and Oak Street.

Sun. Dec. 13th
5:30 PM

Holiday Party: Potluck supper and celebration for LWVA members and guests at the home of Alice Fried, **742 Palmera Court.**

Thu. March 31st
5:30-7:30 PM

MEET YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS (MYPO): Annual Fundraiser: **Speed date your representatives;** raffle; silent auction; food, drink, and community celebration. **Harbor Bay Community Center**

NEWS FROM LWVA'S BOARD & GENERAL MEETING

The Board of Directors met September 17 and got right to work on what looks to be a very exciting year for LWVA. The first action was completing the Board as outlined in our Bylaws. By unanimous vote Keisha Martindill, Ted Frey, Georgia Gates Derr, Juelle Ann Boyer, Kate Quick and Shubha Fanse were approved as 2015-16 Board members. Ruth Dixon-Mueller, Georgia Gates Derr and Gayle Thomas were appointed to the Executive Committee. Thanks to all for your willingness to serve!

Improving communications to our members and community is one of the primary goals of our co-Presidents Anne Spanier and Alice Fried. A Communications Workshop was held on September 5 at the College of Alameda and its success, combined with the efforts of committee chair Georgia Gates Derr along with Mari Clark (Voter), Jon Spangler Publicity), Lisa Yap (Web) and Keasha Martindill (e-blasts), is everywhere to be seen. Have you visited our website lately? You should!

LWVAlameda.org!

Alice proposed another exciting program designed to engage students and inform others about the work done by LWVA: the Youth Outreach/LWVA Debate Scholarship program. Working with AUSD, funded by several grants, the program will provide students from Alameda's public high schools the opportunity to debate the Pros and Cons of a League position with the finalist securing a scholarship award. If you're interested in assisting with this program please contact Alice or complete the form found on the Volunteer page on our website.

Anne Spanier presented information on the upcoming forum - "California's `Top Two' Open Primaries: How Democratic Are They?" The forum will be held October 21 from 7-9pm at the Alameda Free Library featuring State Controller, Betty Yee. LWVA will be doing research on how the Open Primaries may be impacting Alameda elections. **If you're interested in participating in this project, please contact Anne Spanier. For more information on the forum, please visit the calendar section of our website LWVAlameda.org/calendar.html.**

Our chapter has been invited to be involved in several state and federal programs. Please look to our calendar for upcoming meetings being held in our region on **Money in Politics**. Felice Zensius will be observing these meetings and advise us as National looks for more input. Please contact Felice if you are interested in helping with this study. Felice is also the point person for **Make it Fair**, a legislative action intended to address inequities in commercial property assessments under Prop 13. For more information visit www.makeitfairca.com.

Committee Chairs reported to the board on the status of their committees to date. Please visit LWVAlameda.org/volunteer.html to learn about committee goals and volunteer opportunities for 2015-16. Help support the work of our chapter!

Communication: committee continues to broaden the ways to communicate the work of LWVA. For those who watch or attend public meetings, stay tuned for a new Observer Form for members to complete. An updated logo for print media was presented and approved.

Membership: we are currently at 132 members, the highest membership level we have ever attained! The committee continues its coffee meetings with potential members and other outreach activities. Check the Calendar for monthly Hot Topics, Book Club meetings and more.

Voter Service: the committee is preparing for 2016 including outreach to high schools and forums on issues and candidates.

Fundraising: committee is working on various activities this year and plans are already underway for Meet Your Public Officials and its popular Speed Dating program. It's not too early to provide items for the raffle and silent auction.

Programs: The committee has scheduled three forums in October and November: Open Primaries October 21; Alameda Developments including bus tour November 7; and a panel discussing Alameda's Transportation Future November 12. Please help support their work by sharing these dates with your friends and colleagues.

Connie Hanna, who has served LWVA for many years, most recently the very successful Friday Night Socials, announced she will be moving out of the area. To thank her for her years of service to LWVA, the October 2 Friday Night Social will honor Connie for her years of dedication and service. Please reserve at China Villa and help us thank Connie for all she's done.

LWVA MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Welcome to new members!

Three new members joined LWVA in September: Patricia Young, business advisor and staff member of Alameda Home Team (PYoung098@gmail.com); Maria Dominguez, recent law school graduate with extensive volunteer experience (mariaddominguez@gmail.com); and Joyce Lashof, former Dean of the School of Public Health at UC Berkeley, who joins our four other members living at Cardinal Point Retirement Community. Our membership is now at 132!

Membership Committee meets:

Interested in joining us or volunteering for special activities from time to time? Next committee meeting is **Saturday Oct. 3rd, 10 am at Peet's Nob Hill** (north end of Broadway on the estuary). Come for coffee, find out what we do, and share your interests and ideas!

“HOT TOPICS”

A small but enthusiastic discussion group participated in Keasha Martindill's presentation on “Sanctuary Cities in the News” at the Alameda Library on Sat. Sept. 26th. The guiding “pros and cons” question was whether their policies of noncompliance with federal mandates for reporting undocumented migrants caught up in the criminal justice system contribute to illegal immigration and crime, or do they serve more to protect immigrants from police harassment and potential deportation, even if they are victims?

Contact Keasha at KBJbarretts@sbcgloal.net if you'd like to receive her informative data handouts. You can learn more about Sanctuary Cities, including San Francisco and Oakland, at <http://ww2/kqued.org/lowdown/2015/07/10/explainer-what-are-sanctuarycities>. Or simply Google “Sanctuary Cities” and see what you find!

Our next Hot Topics at the Library is on Sat. Oct. 24th, 2-4 pm (see calendar). We'll be discussing national, state and local initiatives for raising the minimum wage and their promises and challenges. What's fair (to workers and small businesses)? What's feasible? Who is/will be covered? Please join us. Space is limited to 12 participants and the discussions are always fun.

COMMUNICATIONS

Have something to say? Write us a letter!

Letters may address any League-related topic, activity, position, or issue. Letters should be brief (no more than 100 words), clear, civil, and may include hyperlinks. Author's names will be published. Phone and email contacts should be sent with your submission but may be withheld at your request. Have something to say? Write VOTER editor Mari Clark at meclark922@gmail.com.

September 5th Communications Workshop was a great success!

A Communications Workshop organized by Alice Fried on "Creating Messages that MOVE" attracted ten enthusiastic LWVA members plus one Berkeley Leaguer and several College of Alameda students, faculty and administrators to the College Student Union on Sat. Sept. 5th.

Presented by LWVC organizational capacity-builder and trainer Sarah Diefendorf, the four-hour session covered a range of skills, tips, and exercises on how to connect with others through stories, frame advocacy and education messages, and craft presentations that inspire.

The workshop kicked off with an especially entertaining and informative exercise on how each of us communicates with one another in groups and makes decisions. What is our personality type and working style? "North" (decisive and quick: bottom line)? "East" (explore & create: visionary)? "South" (share & support: healer)? "West" (details before action: engineer)? Each of us chose our group and identified our strengths and (yes!) limitations and insensitivities in working with others.

Join the Alameda League or renew your membership today!



Name _____

Other Names _____
(if a family membership)

Address _____ City _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

\$70 Single Membership \$97 Family Membership free Student Membership (full-time, voting age, enroll by mail only) Dues year is Jan 1 – Dec 31.

Printed and mailed VOTER Fee: \$10. (Digital newsletter is free.)

Make check payable to LWV Alameda and mail to: LWVA, P. O. Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501.
Membership dues are tax deductible. To pay online, visit LWVAlameda.org/join.html.

Consider a Donation to the League

Please consider sending an additional tax-deductible donation to LWV Alameda, P. O. Box 1645, Alameda,